

### REMARKS

In view of the following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are requested.

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ichiman in view of Blard et al., and claims 9-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ichiman in view of Blard et al., and further in view of Ono et al.

Ichiman is available as prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), and accordingly, in accordance with 35 U.S.C. § 103(c) it is hereby stated that the subject matter of the Ichiman publication and the instantly claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, commonly assigned to Uchiyama Manufacturing Corp. Thus, Ichiman is not available as prior art with regard to the current rejection of claims 4 and 9-11, whereby this rejection cannot be maintained.

Accordingly, claims 4-14 are allowable.


In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and an early Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If after reviewing this Response, the Examiner believes that any issues remain which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative by telephone to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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